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22 OCT 1969

MEMORANDUM FOR: Assistant Deputy Director for Intelligence
SUBJECT : Reference to New Soviet Bomber by Marshal Grechko

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1. In a discussion of India's bomber requirements, Marshal Grechko reportedly told [REDACTED] that a new bomber was under production, but it might easily take two to three years before large scale production began. The discussion indicated that the Indians were not interested in the TU-16 Badger and that the TU-22 Blinder was not available.

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2. Marshal Grechko apparently was referring to the new Soviet swing-wing bomber. A report in April 1969 from the same source also contained a reference to an undefined new bomber which might be available in a few years.

3. The statement that the new bomber is "under production" probably refers to the building of the prototype, and the term "large-scale production" to the initiation of series production. There is frequently some difficulty in making a precise English translation of Russian expressions concerning "production".

4. We believe that it would be about four to six years before the new bomber would be available in sufficient numbers for operational service with the Soviet Air Forces. This is not inconsistent with the initiation of series production in two or three years. In the case of the TU-22 Blinder, for example, series production began in 1959 but the aircraft did not enter service until 1962.

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5. It probably would be well into the late 1970's before the new bomber would be available for export. A small number might be supplied somewhat earlier--say, about 1975-76--if political considerations were dominant.

6. The report also confirms other evidence that the Soviets are dissatisfied with the TU-22 Blinder. Production of the TU-22 has fallen off during the past year, and we believe that this program may be coming to an end.

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BRUCE C. CLARKE, Jr.
Director
Strategic Research

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